

MEDIA RELEASE

Zurich, 21 May 2012



Anton Graff, *Portrait of Adrian Zingg*, 1796/99 (detail), Kunstmuseum St. Gallen

Looking at Landscapes

**Conference:
Wissenschaft, Sentiment und Geschäftssinn.
Landschaft um 1800**

Compared with masterpieces of the 17th century or the Romantic period, late 18th-century Swiss and German landscapes were considered to be of little artistic merit and were neglected for many years. Only recently has art history turned its attention to this subject, which now provides the focus for a conference organised by the Swiss Institute for Art Research (SIK-ISEA) in conjunction with Kunsthau Zurich.

Landscapes first blossomed as a genre in Rome and the Netherlands during the 17th century. Works created in the latter half of the 18th century, especially in Switzerland and Germany, were long overshadowed by this golden age. Compared with Romantic ideas about landscape which emerged later, their quality was often seen as second-rate. Recently, however, this era in landscape painting has become a field for research in art history.

As the 18th century drew to a close, a change was clearly occurring in the way landscapes were presented in the visual arts. This was due in part to progress and new knowledge about the natural sciences, optics and the psychology of perception, and in particular to the new printing techniques that were used to make reproductions. But there were economic and socio-cultural factors at play too, and these give rise to a number of questions: How did artists contribute to these new visual concepts, either as teachers or as entrepreneurs pursuing commercial goals? Do we need to revisit the notion of the original work in the light of these developments? What impact did early modern tourism have on the meaning of landscapes and the ways people saw them?

Parallel to the conference, Kunsthau Zurich will host an exhibition, compiled jointly with the Collection of Prints, Drawings and Photographs at the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen in Dresden, on [Adrian Zingg: Precursor of Romanticism](#) (25 May–12 August 2012). The conference will therefore devote a special place to Adrian Zingg (1734–1816) and his Dresden studio.

Download a detailed conference programme at www.sik-isea.ch (Events).

Venue and registration

The conference on 14th and 15th June 2012 is taking place at SIK-ISEA, Zollikerstrasse 32 (near Kreuzplatz), Postbox 1124, CH-8032 Zurich.

Please register by 4 June 2012: by post, by e-mail to sik@sik-isea.ch or by fax to +41 381 52 50. Participation is free of charge.

Contact for more information

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